

## **Soil and Water Conservation Commission Cost Share Committee**

**November 2, 2012: 8:30am**

**Attendees:** Vicky Porter, Charlie Bass, Julie Henshaw, Brian Lannon, Davis Ferguson, Brian Chatham

**Guests:** Kelly Ibrahim, Tom Hill, Lisa Fine

### **I. District Board of Supervisors Roles and Responsibilities Section policy revisions**

Commission packet mailing: clean copy of each policy first, then the track changes version.

**A. District boards' responsibility in technical and financial assistance distribution** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

**B. District supervisors requirements for cost share programs** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

Each new supervisor should receive a copy of this policy (division responsibility) and schedule time to discuss these policies at the first board meetings of new supervisors (December – February meetings) – committee requests that division staff work with districts through regional coordinators on stressing the importance of this policy and supervisor responsibilities at local meetings.

Include in the School of Government presentations and handouts.

Regional coordinators could meet with new supervisors before or after a district board meeting to review these policies and answer questions, in addition to ensuring that the district covers it during the meeting.

**C. District supervisor use of cost share program funds** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

a. **Supervisor Contract Addendum** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

Reformat – make the form one page, and review spacing and lines

b. **Commission Member Addendum** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

Reformat – make the form one page, and review spacing and lines

**D. District supervisors' involvement as cost share contractors** – no changes

**E. Supervisor involvement in spot checks for cost share program contracts** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

**F. Commission advisory to districts on secondary employment** – committee approved *proposed revisions*

## **II. Noncompliance question**

Some districts have expressed concern recently to division staff over having to conduct non-compliance. Policies and rules stipulate that non-compliance process must be followed, but rule does not state who has to conduct non-compliance. Policies refer to district roles.

Committee discussion:

- Noncompliance should start with the district, as they are the ones who initiate the contract and have local relationships with cooperators.
- If districts are willing to implement cost share programs and approve contracts, they have the responsibility to implement noncompliance processes when BMPs are out of compliance.
- Supervisors may not fully understand their role in pursuing contracts in noncompliance.
- Districts may need some sort of repercussions for not pursuing noncompliance. Possibly withholding funds for the following purposes – listed in order of priority
  - Technical assistance
  - Matching funds
  - Financial assistance
- There is currently no policy for withholding funds for lack of pursuing noncompliance
- There are currently two active cases of noncompliance which the districts are not interested in pursuing. The committee recommends division staff take the following actions:
  - Send letter to board with noncompliance policies and next steps. Ask for a written response from the district within 30 days, and ask them to include their reasoning on why.
    - Include in this correspondence a template noncompliance letter to districts for use
- Draft new policy with repercussions at the next committee meeting

## **III. TA Survey**

Add a question about strategy plans - how did you try and meet the needs in your district with reduced cost share program allocations? How do you secure funding from other sources?

### Draft new question

With reduced allocations of commission cost share programs, how did your district meet the needs identified in the strategy plan? (check all that apply)

- Secured outside funding (grants, Ecosystem Enhancement Program, Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, other non-federal farm bill program funding)
- Increased the use of federal farm bill programs in the county
- Only implementing state cost share program funds
- Other (text box)

*How will we measure this?*

### **Agenda items for next meeting**

- Revise the TA survey
  - Prepare the introduction information for the survey and develop an outreach plan with timelines
- Prepare a draft non-compliance policy
- Prepare revisions for 4 of the program accountability policies
- Next meeting will be held on December 12<sup>th</sup>: 8:30am -11:30am

Additional policies to draft:

- Spot check policy
- Strategy plan policy
- Noncompliance policy